



CPED STAFF REPORT

Prepared for the Heritage Preservation Commission

HPC Agenda Item #2

July 22, 2014

BZH-28249

HERITAGE PRESERVATION APPLICATION SUMMARY

Property Location: 150 Portland Avenue South #500
Project Name: Sherman rooftop living space and deck addition
Prepared By: [Lisa Steiner](#), City Planner, (612) 673-3950
Applicant: Koski Architecture
Project Contact: Phillip Koski
Ward: 3
Neighborhood: Downtown West; adjacent to Downtown East
Request: To allow a rooftop living space and deck addition to a non-contributing addition in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

Required Applications:

Certificate of Appropriateness	To allow a rooftop living space and deck addition in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.
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HISTORIC PROPERTY INFORMATION

Current Name	Whitney Landmark Residences
Historic Name	Standard Mill
Historic Address	150 Portland Avenue South
Original Construction Date	Standard Mill: 1879; 5 th story added 1881 Elevator tower and two-story building addition: 1987
Original Architect	William Dixon Gray
Original Builder	Otis Arkwright Pray
Original Engineer	William Dixon Gray
Historic Use	Flour Mill (1879-1948); Hotel (1987-2003)
Current Use	Condominiums (2007-present)
Proposed Use	No change

Date Application Deemed Complete	June 23, 2014	Date Extension Letter Sent	Not applicable
End of 60-Day Decision Period	August 22, 2014	End of 120-Day Decision Period	Not applicable

CLASSIFICATION

Local Historic District	St. Anthony Falls
Period of Significance	1848-1941
Criteria of Significance	Architecture, Commerce, Industry, Transportation
Date of Local Designation	1971
Date of National Register Listing	1971
Applicable Design Guidelines	<i>St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines</i> and <i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties</i>

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND.

The subject property includes three main components: the Standard Mill building constructed in 1879, a 131 foot elevator tower constructed in 1987, and a two-story addition at the corner of Portland Avenue and Second Street South which was also constructed in 1987. Below-grade parking, constructed in 2007, is located below the plaza on West River Parkway. The two-story addition is the portion of the property that is proposed to be altered.

The 1879 Standard Mill building was designed by noted mill engineer William Dixon Gray and built by Otis A. Pray. The building is a Commercial Italianate style mill and after it was constructed it was “immediately hailed as a model establishment.”¹ Constructed of cream-colored brick, the building was articulated by a corbelled brick and iron cornice as well as pilaster strips delineating bays with segmental-arched window openings.² (See attachment 2 in the appendix for a historic image of the Standard Mill.) The Standard Mill was one of many mills constructed in the West Side milling district which helped to establish Minneapolis as the largest flour producer in the country for nearly half a century. Though many Minneapolis mills closed and were demolished during the 1930s, the Standard Mill remained in operation until 1948. It is one of only four remaining mills on the West Side.³ After that time, the building was utilized for light manufacturing and warehousing.⁴

In 1987, the Standard Mill was redeveloped into a 97-room luxury hotel. This was a relatively early example of adaptive reuse in the district which also received National Park Service historic tax credits.⁵ The elevator tower was constructed at this time and new windows were added, replacing the historic two-over-two double-hung windows with similar metal windows.⁶ An existing building at the corner on

¹ Historic American Engineering Record: Standard Mill, 116-118 Portland Avenue South, “Photographs & Written Historical and Descriptive Data,” 1990. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/mn/mn0000/mn0098/data/mn0098data.pdf>

² Standard Flour Mill, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Page 13

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hess, Roise & Company, “Architecture and Historic Preservation on the Minneapolis Riverfront,” 2007. http://www.mnhs.org/places/safhb/final_report.pdf

⁵ National Register Nomination Form, Page 14

⁶ Ibid.

Portland and 2nd Street South was demolished to allow for the subject two-story building addition which housed the hotel entrance and lobby, porte-cochere drop-off area, and a second-story ballroom. (See attachment 3 in the appendix for a photo of the property prior to the 1987 renovation.) The addition was designed to mimic many of the details present on the Standard Mill building. These modern additions are non-contributing.

In 2007, the property was converted into condominiums. The former hotel ballroom in the two-story addition was renovated as a single unit with roof rights over the entire addition. In 2008, four windows on the South elevation were replaced with larger windows. A penthouse addition was also approved at this time for which a roof opening was created for access but the penthouse was never constructed.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new 672 square foot enclosed living space and 2,448 square foot roof deck over the existing unit. The enclosed living space will be accessed through a stairwell leading from the main level of the condominium unit. The living space will include a wet bar, bathroom, media room, and small storage space. Main doors to access the deck will be located on the south elevation facing 2nd Street South. The storage space will be accessed by exterior doors which will face north towards the elevator tower. The deck railings are proposed to be set back approximately three feet from the Portland Avenue and 2nd Street South elevations.

The enclosed living space addition is proposed to be 12 feet 6 inches in height with a low sloped roof behind a flat parapet. The exterior material of the addition is proposed to be weathered corrugated steel siding. The proposed decking material is ipe wood panels with a cable railing system surrounding the deck area. The applicant is proposing to reinstall the four windows removed during the 2008 renovation into the east wall of the enclosed living space along Portland Avenue. The south-facing wall of the living space is proposed to include storefront windows to match the 2008 replacement windows on that same elevation.

RELATED APPROVALS.

Planning Case #	Application	Description	Action
BZH-25470	Certificate of No Change	Window replacement and penthouse addition	Approved

PUBLIC COMMENTS.

No public comments have been received as of the writing of this staff report. Any correspondence received prior to the public meeting will be forwarded on to the Heritage Preservation Commission for consideration.

ANALYSIS

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development has analyzed the application to allow a rooftop living space and deck addition based on the following [findings](#):

1. *The alteration is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark or historic district was designated.*

The subject portion of the property is a non-contributing addition to the contributing Standard Mill building. The St. Anthony Falls Historic District is significant for its architecture, commerce, industry, and transportation. The period of significance for the district is 1848-1941. The two-story addition was constructed well after the period of significance in 1987 when the property was converted into a hotel. While the addition is still compatible with the district, it does not contribute to the identified era of history of the district. As conditioned, the proposed alterations are compatible with the non-contributing addition as well as with the contributing Standard Mill building.

2. *The alteration is compatible with and supports the interior and/or exterior designation in which the property was designated.*

The Standard Mill was detailed in the National Register nomination as a site of major importance to the district. The architectural features of the building were noted in the nomination as well as the importance of the mill's designer, William D. Gray. The property is also significant because the Standard Mill is one of only four mills remaining from the series of mills that were once located on the west side of the river. The elevator tower and two-story addition that resulted from the 1987 conversion of the building into a hotel are non-contributing to the district. Staff finds that as conditioned, the proposed alterations to the non-contributing two-story addition continue to support the designation of the Standard Mill within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

3. *The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the landmark or historic district for which the district was designated.*

Both the City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Regulations and the National Register of Historic Places identify integrity as the authenticity of historic properties and recognize seven aspects that define a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The proposed project will not impact the integrity of the Standard Mill building as all proposed work will take place on the non-contributing addition. The applicant has proposed to reinstall windows from the 1987 renovation along the east elevation of the living space addition. These will be compatible with the front elevation of the Standard Mill building along Portland Avenue as well as the lower floors of the two-story addition. The proposed project is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

4. *The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the applicable design guidelines adopted by the commission.*

The *St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines* were adopted in 2012. The document specifies that non-contributing properties, specifically newer properties that are not within the period of significance, should follow the guidelines for new infill as well as landscape, streetscape, and open space guidelines, general guidelines, and character area guidance. The primary objective for non-contributing properties is that any alterations will be compatible with the district.

The alteration is consistent with the following design guidelines for new infill:

9.5: A contemporary interpretation of traditional designs is appropriate.

- a. The design should be compatible with the relevant character area.
- b. Contemporary interpretations of architectural details are appropriate.
- c. Incorporate contemporary details to create interest while expressing a new, compatible design.

9.16: Use simple, rectangular roof forms in commercial, warehouse and industrial contexts.

- a. Flat roofs are appropriate on the majority of the buildings in the district.

9.17: Design a roof to be similar in form to those used traditionally in the character area.

9.20: Building materials shall be similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen historically in the context.

- c. The material also should be appropriate to the context.

9.21: Contemporary materials that are similar in character to traditional ones will be considered

- a. Generally, one primary material should be used for a building with one or two accent materials. Accent materials should be used with restraint.
- d. Contemporary, alternative materials should appear similar in scale, durability and proportion to those used traditionally.

9.22 Use high quality, durable materials.

- a. Materials should be proven to be durable in the local Minneapolis climate.
- b. The material should maintain an intended finish over time, or acquire a patina, which is understood to be a likely outcome.

9.24 Arrange windows to reflect the traditional rhythm and general alignment of windows in the area.

- a. Use appropriate window rhythms and alignments, such as:
 - Vertically proportioned, single or sets of windows, “punched” into a more solid wall surface, and evenly spaced along upper floors
 - Window sills or headers that align
 - Rows of windows or storefront systems of similar dimensions, aligned horizontally along a wall surface
- b. Creative interpretations of traditional window arrangement will be considered.

However, the proposed project is inconsistent with the general guideline for roof decks. The general guidelines apply to a preservation project or a new building and to a variety of building types throughout the entire district. The design guidelines acknowledge that balconies and roof decks were not part of the historic building types in the district and states that where proposed, they should have as little impact on a historic structure or context as possible and not draw undue attention away from the character of the building. Further, the guidelines specify that roof decks are appropriate on new buildings as long as they remain subordinate to the overall historic context. The proposed project is not consistent with the following specific design guideline for roof decks in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District:

7.12 Minimize the visual impact of a roof deck as seen from the street.

- a. On a commercial or industrial building, set any guard rails and other supporting elements back one structural bay or 15', whichever is greater from the facade so they are not visible from the sidewalk below.

The railing for the deck is proposed to be set back only 3 feet, 3 inches from the south façade and only 3 feet from the east façade. The deck railing will extend about 10 inches above the parapet wall at the parapet's highest point and approximately 30 inches from the lowest point of the parapet. Staff is recommending that the railing be set back 15 feet from each building wall, as dictated by the design guidelines, in order to minimize the visual impact of the roof deck as seen from the street and ensure that the roof deck is subordinate to the overall historic context. As conditioned, the alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the historic district.

5. *The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the recommendations contained in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.*

As conditioned, the proposed enclosed living space and roof deck on a non-contributing addition in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District is consistent with the following recommendations in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties:

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

6. *The certificate of appropriateness conforms to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable preservation policies in small area plans adopted by the city council.*

As stated in Findings #1 through #5, CPED is supportive of the proposed addition to the non-contributing structure with a condition to set back the deck railings 15 feet from the street-facing building walls. As conditioned, the certificate of appropriateness will conform to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and would be consistent with the following policies of the comprehensive plan:

Preservation Policy 8.1: Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city's architecture, history, and culture.

8.1.2 Require new construction in historic districts to be compatible with the historic fabric.

Preservation Policy 8.8: Preserve neighborhood character by preserving the quality of the built environment.

8.8.1 Preserve and maintain the character and quality of residential neighborhoods with regulatory tools such as the zoning code and housing maintenance code.

7. *Destruction of any property. Before approving a certificate of appropriateness that involves the destruction, in whole or in part, of any landmark, property in an historic district or nominated property under interim protection, the commission shall make findings that the destruction is necessary to correct an unsafe or dangerous condition on the property, or that there are no reasonable alternatives to the destruction. In determining whether reasonable alternatives exist, the commission shall consider, but not be limited to, the significance of the property, the integrity of the property and the economic value or usefulness of the existing structure, including its current use, costs of renovation and feasible alternative uses. The commission may delay a final decision for a reasonable period of time to allow parties interested in preserving the property a reasonable opportunity to act to protect it.*

No destruction of property is proposed.

Before approving a Certificate of Appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the Commission shall make findings that alterations are proposed in a manner that demonstrates that the Applicant has made adequate consideration of the following documents and regulations:

8. *The description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which designation of the landmark or historic district was based.*

The proposed alteration demonstrates that the applicant has made adequate consideration of the original nomination of the Standard Mill building within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The alteration will be located on a non-contributing addition to the building and the enclosed living space addition will be set back significantly from the building faces to minimize any impact on the Standard Mill building. Additionally, the reuse of the windows from the 1987 renovation of the property will help the addition remain compatible with the primary building façade of the Standard Mill building. Building materials will be contemporary but appropriate to the context of the district.

9. *Where applicable, adequate consideration of Title 20 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Zoning Code, Chapter 530, Site Plan Review.*

This project does not trigger Site Plan Review.

10. *The typology of treatments delineated in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the associated guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, reconstructing, and restoring historic buildings.*

The applicant has made adequate consideration of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, specifically the guidelines that are applicable for additions to non-contributing features.

Before approving a Certificate of Appropriateness that involves alterations to a property within an historic district, the Commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

11. *The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued significance and integrity of all contributing properties in the historic district based on the period of significance for which the district was designated.*

As discussed in finding #4, staff is recommending that the deck railing be set back 15 feet from the building in order to ensure that the deck railings are subordinate to the overall historic context of the district and comply with the general design guideline for roof decks. This setback will reduce the visual impact from the street, particularly the visibility of the railing when viewing the primary façade of the Standard Mill building along Portland Avenue. Staff finds that the greater setback will help ensure continued significance and integrity of the contributing properties in the historic district.

12. *Granting the certificate of appropriateness will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not negatively alter the essential character of the historic district.*

Staff finds that a greater setback than proposed will help to meet the intent of the district by aligning with the design guidelines. The living space addition is planned to be set back significantly, about 31 feet from the east façade of the building and 27 feet from the south façade. However, the deck railings would only be approximately 3 feet from the edge of the south and east elevations. Staff is recommending that a setback no smaller than 15 feet be allowed in order to ensure that the rooftop deck guideline that deck railings be subordinate to the historic context and minimally visible from the street is met. As conditioned, the certificate of appropriateness will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not negatively alter the essential character of the district.

13. *The certificate of appropriateness will not be injurious to the significance and integrity of other resources in the historic district and will not impede the normal and orderly preservation of surrounding resources as allowed by regulations in the preservation ordinance.*

The enclosed living space meets the design guidelines for new additions to non-contributing buildings and utilizes materials which are contemporary but compatible with the historic materials in the district. Staff is recommending that as a condition of approval, the deck railings be set back 15 feet in order to meet the general design guidelines for roof decks in the district. As conditioned, the certificate of appropriateness for the living space and deck addition will not be injurious to the significance and integrity of other resources in the historic district.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development for the Certificate of Appropriateness:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness to allow a rooftop living space and deck addition to the property at 150 Portland Avenue South #500, subject to the following conditions:

1. The deck railings shall be set back at least 15 feet from the Portland Avenue and 2nd Street South building facades.
2. CPED staff shall review and approve the final plans and elevations prior to building permit issuance.
3. By ordinance, approvals are valid for a period of two years from the date of the decision unless required permits are obtained and the action approved is substantially begun and proceeds in a continuous basis toward completion. Upon written request and for good cause, the planning director may grant up to a one year extension if the request is made in writing no later than July 22, 2016.
4. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this Certificate of Appropriateness shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this Certificate of Appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Zoning map
2. Historic image, 1879
3. HAER Photo, prior to 1987
4. Site photos
5. Plans
6. Building elevations
7. Renderings
8. Historic photo
9. Photos
10. Correspondence